

Helping Washington's Blind Youth Achieve Success

Your Dollars in Action

Thanks to the generosity οf contributions, blind students have been able to access assistive technology through the WSBF. Vaughn Brown, current Washington State School for the Blind (WSSB) student, and alumni Mai Nguyen, are among the students who have benefited. Vaughn and Mai presented their personal stories of how





this technology impacts their everyday lives to guests at the WSBF Benefit Dinner and Concert, June 25, 2006. Here are excerpts of their inspirational presentations.

In their own words

Vaughn Brown

"My experience with assistive technology... started when I was six months old...when it was discovered that I had hearing loss."



"Thanks to hearing aids, and later cochlear implants, I learned to listen and talk. But I'm not here to talk about being deaf. I am here to talk about being blind and the technology available to make my life easier.

"Thanks to computer

technology, I can produce work equal to my sighted peers. "Jaws for Windows." a speech output program for my computer, reads the text off the screen so that I can do research on the

Internet, write in word processors, and print in both Braille and print formats. This enables me and other visually impaired or blind people to attend school, hold a job, produce quality work and compete with sighted peers."

"As students or jobholders notetaking is an important skill. By using a variety of devices, such as Voice Notes, Braille Notes, and laptops, we keep ourselves organized. can Thanks to the Foundation. I have a Braille Note. This device is similar to

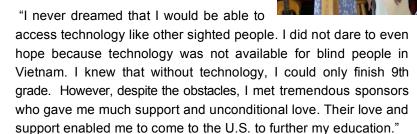
a portable computer. With the Braille Note, I have the capability to use the word processor, the Internet, calculators, email, address books, and a daily planner—all technologies that help blind and visually impaired persons. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology is now being used to help us navigate the streets. I can just plug it into my Braille Note."

"By using these technologies, the difficulties of equal access are reduced. Thus, I am unafraid of facing academics."

-Vaughn Brown, current WSSB Student

Mai Nguyen

"10 years ago, when I was attending the blind school in Vietnam, I never dreamed that one day I would come to the United States."



"During my second year in the U.S., I came to the Washington State School for the Blind and once again met many caring teachers who gave me love and support. They did not mind going the extra mile helping me, especially when it came to technology. They taught me how to use the talking dictionary, the calculator,

the Braille 'N Speak and many others. The teachers worked with me one-on-one to make sure that I had the skills needed to enter college. At the end of the year, I was able to use the skills I learned to go to college and continued with my education. "

"Now, I am no longer afraid because I know that I am lucky to have wonderful sponsors and teachers who give me love and support.

I am no longer afraid because I know that with the help of assistive technology, I will be able to live a

normal life. After I graduate with my Master's degree in 2008, I would like to be a teacher and teach students with visual impairments."

-Mai Nguyen, WSSB alumni





Vaughn's courageous

story prompted local,

philanthropist, Ray Hickey,

to make a \$100,000 gift to

students can also benefit

WSBF, "so future blind

from the advantages of

access technology," and

not be afraid.



Thank you.

